

A train was just making up. An empty freight car attracted him. The chalk marks on its outside told him that it was city-bound.

At each end of the car was a heap of straw, evidently the former covering of a brick shipment. The train had started and Justus had begun a frugal lunch, when there was a rustle in the heap of straw at the other end of the car. A frowzy-headed fellow emerged from the impromptu couch with the words:

"Hey, old pard! That looks good and I'm hungry."

"Then you're welcome to all you can eat," answered Justus brightly, and his fellow traveler fell to with a vengeance.

He was a good-natured, roving tramp, one of the sort that appreciates a kindness, and during the next two hours he regaled Justus with many an interesting recital of unique experiences.

They had got well out into the country and Justus was seated near to the half-open door, his companion lying on his back smoking, when there was an ominous jar.

The train had suddenly let up on speed. At the shock Justus glanced beyond the door. His eyes bulged. Ahead, near a bridge where the rails curved, he saw half a dozen cars swerve out and go down an embankment.

"Jump!" he almost screamed, grabbing at the tramp and pulling him to his feet.

Head over heels both went tumbling down the grass-clad embankment. They sat up at its bottom somewhat bruised, to stare in awe as the car they had left met the jam ahead and was splintered to fragments.

"I say!" shuddered the tramp, "you grabbed me just in time. Thanks!"

Two hours later the queerly-matched twain stood near the center of the wreck, interested in what they saw. A great car full of grain had left the track, striking a rocky embank-

ment, its golden contents scattered over the ground like an exhausted avalanche.

The wrecking train and an inspector had arrived. The tramp had been acting in a reflective and calculative manner for some time.

"Wish I had a fair cash stake," he observed longingly.

"What's the idea?" questioned Justus.

"Why, there's the inspector going over things. I've been in this kind of wrecks before. See that car of grain?"

"Yes?"

"And the wrecked chicken car with about half its freight killed? Well, that's wreck salvage, hard for the company to handle. If I was a speculator I'd buy the stuff offhand. It can be got for a trifle."

"But what would you do with it?"

"Well, by hook or crook I'd find some old shed or barn that I could rent and take care of the truck."

"Look here," said Justus, after a moment's meditation, "I have a little cash. If you think there is something to be made here, I'll invest."

"You will," cried the tramp readily. "Leave it to me, then."

He was gone an hour and came back with shining eyes.

"Say," he reported, "I'm able to make a dandy arrangement to start a regular chicken farm. Now, let me dicker with the inspector."

Seventy dollars would buy the salvage, provided the screened boxes of the chicken cars were denuded of their contents within twenty-four hours.

What an afternoon and night they had of it! Less than half a mile distant the tramp had located a little cabin that had been vacated by its owner for a more pretentious residence. It had sheds and a stable.

Its owner would lease the outfit for a trifle. By noon the next day 1,800 live chickens had been transported to the new "chicken farm." The grain they could remove at their leisure,